

## **Creative Arts Mentoring Club**

### **Request for DHS CCAC Support**

## **Our Requirements**

Our program requires a safe space with room to accommodate 30 to 50 or more children of ages 4 to 17. The following amenities and features are necessary for the operations of our program:

- **Parking area suitable for dropping off children.**
- **Kitchen with enough space to prepare meals for up to 50 people.**
- **Small office space (shared ok)**
- **Workshop, studio, or crafts room big enough to accommodate 10 to 15 kids.**
- **Auditorium, stage, music studio, or other space suitable for performing arts activities and big enough to accommodate 10 to 15 kids.**
- **Common area with TV display or projector and comfortable furniture for group discussions, watching films, and downtime.**

We have not yet priced such a property in the current commercial rental or real estate market.

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## Our Values

To ensure that there are no misconceptions about the nature of our program or the way it is administered, we are including a list of core values that ensure equitable access and a healthy environment for the students, mentors and staff.

**Supportive Environment & Positive Input:** for kids that have suffered abuse, trauma, or have other emotional or psychological challenges, it can be very difficult to even function in a social setting, much less open up and be free and expressive. Our newcomers are always given plenty of encouragement and any kind of bullying behavior is not tolerated. We teach our kids to be respectful and constructive when giving their opinion of others.

**Family Engagement:** In order to facilitate the educational and developmental process for our children, we believe it's essential to maintain good relationships with any family or guardians they have.

**Inclusion & Respect:** We are committed to embracing all types of families and domestic situations including those of mixed ethnicities, same sex unions, disabilities, mental health concerns, institutional or group housing, or even homelessness with equal respect and openness.

**Universal Access:** Willingness to make accommodations or take other special considerations to ensure the program is as accessible, valuable and welcoming as possible to everyone, regardless of any personal challenges such as advanced age, physical or mental disabilities, lack of access to healthcare or social services, or immigration status.

**Safety & Health:** our children's well being is our primary concern so we diligently train our mentors and guides; test and inspect all facilities, products, materials and equipment for health and safety issues; research, incorporate and follow all ordinances, codes, regulations, and recommendations or best practices set forth by all relevant agencies and organizations. Our curriculum includes culinary arts in which we teach our kids about proper nutrition and how to prepare meals safely and maintain sanitary preparation areas.

**No Economic Barriers:** we all know that the working class is struggling and those living below the poverty line are faced with daily obstacles to accessing the basic necessities of life. We believe that, regardless of one's means or status, access to the arts and the cultural history of human civilization is a birthright for everyone. We strive to overcome financial barriers and make our curriculum and activities accessible and relevant to all members of our community.

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## **Mission Statement**

**Our mission for the Creative Arts Mentoring Club is to use the power of imagination to inspire, and our loving support to empower the at-risk, disadvantaged, underserved, or otherwise troubled young people of the California desert, helping them to cope with challenges and ultimately grow to realize their full potential as productive, responsible and caring adults.**

## **Narrative Program Description**

**We provide a weekly after school arts program for kids facing a variety of challenges. We use both therapeutic and academic applications of all the creative arts including visual art, design, dance, drama, and music.**

**Our psychologist-guided mentors attempt to inspire, support, enable and empower young environment. Activities are delivered in an individual-focused, supportive, social group setting that stimulates kids' imaginations helping them to better understand the world around them.**

**Along with the creative learning process, our kids are also building a wealth of cultural knowledge and developing skills and tools for interpreting life's challenges and harsh realities in a thoughtful and compassionate way. That enables the children to rise above shame, fear, and negativity. As a result, students enhance their ability to communicate their insights and ideas in unique, impactful, constructive and relevant ways.**

## **Benefits to Our Families and Communities**

**Enabling kids to express themselves through movement, color, sound, and texture is inherently therapeutic and researchers have confirmed a multitude of benefits from starting this process in early developmental years.**

**All of our kids at least get a solid foundation of cultural literacy and gain some momentum on a path of lifelong learning as creative beings. Most of them are very loyal, often attending for multiple years and eventually achieving mastery over a chosen art form, and sometimes becoming a mentor themselves. That is the ultimate affirmation that our program works sustainably and makes a lasting impact in our kids' lives, and in turn on our community.**

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### Our Story

This organization was started several years ago by Hope Scott as a casual weekly club for kids who needed a place to go after school and positive influences in their lives. The impact of this simple concept was greater than we had imagined and the club grew too large to continue operating in Hope's home. We incorporated as a 501(c)3 in 2014 and have struggled to secure and maintain a facility to run our program ever since.

The trials and tribulations we've endured regarding facilities has taken a great toll on our children and their families. Some of the kids have expressed concern that they caused us to lose our spaces. Many of them have transient home lives, frequently moving from a parent's home to a grandparent's, etc. Providing a stable and consistent base in a safe, positive and supportive environment is essential to our mission of securing peace and hope for these young people.

The lack of a stable venue is an unacceptable hindrance to our work. We believe that the public service we offer, the public events we organize and participate in, as well as the public art projects we would like to be able to produce for the community make us eligible for support from the CCAC and the Public Arts Fund that is funded by contributions from new real estate developments in DHS.

What could be a more appropriate source of funding to solve our facilities problem than the developers of large real estate projects which drive up rents and property values making it impossible for small organizations like ours to secure a safe, clean, adequate space within our budget.

We request that the commissioners of the CCAC review the specifics of our program and its value to the community and consider making recommendations to the City Council to approve the use of CCAC resources to affect a feasible solution to our predicament.

### Our Vision

Securing Peace and Hope for the children of Desert Hot Springs and the California desert through the inspiring power of creativity and the discipline of the fine arts.